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THE

# Jewish Expositor,

AND

## FRIEND OF ISRAEL.

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AUGUST, 1817.

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THE TRI-UNE GOD.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים

THE mysterious doctrine of the blessed Trinity, which makes Christians maintain, that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, is one of the principal objections of Jews against the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth; for these assert, that he is the teacher of this doctrine, and that it overturns true religion, because, say they, the inference must be, that there are three Gods, which is contrary both to reason and revelation, from which we know that there is but one. Some mis-named Christians have fallen into the same error, supposing the word *person*, which Christians have been obliged to adopt for the better expression of this article of their faith, to have the same signification in relation to the Godhead, that it has in reference to creatures. When we speak of three human, or an-

gelic beings, we necessarily mean three men, or three angels, so in like manner they conceive that whenever we speak of three divine substances, we must mean three Gods. This is the conclusion, which is presumptuously drawn from such an expression, but it is by no means a just inference. *They* depart from the doctrine of the Bible, and if they would have Christians to follow them, they should prove that the Gospel, which teaches that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, does at the same time teach, that there are three Gods. But the contrary is every where maintained, and as the Spirit of God can neither be mistaken, nor contradict himself, nor wish to deceive us, we must either lay aside our reason, or acknowledge that there are three substances in the Godhead, which is nevertheless one, although the Scriptures style him Father, Son, and Spirit; and although they



testify, when particular mention is made of the Father, that the Father is God; when of the Son, that the Son is God; and when of the Spirit, that the Spirit is God, because they invariably declare, that there is but one God. Objectors would have some ground for differing with Christians, if, when we affirmed the Father to be God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, we drew the same conclusion that they do, viz. that there are three Gods; but nothing is further removed from the Christian doctrine, which acknowledges but one God, and this is a capital and fundamental part of Christianity, and of the whole Bible.

Christians believe that the New Testament is the pure word of the living God, and that its contents are true, because the Hebrew Scriptures, which in like manner they acknowledge to be the word of God, could not be true, unless the Gospel were true. The Jewish Scriptures make known the abolition of carnal sacrifices; that God will enter into a new covenant with man, which covenant will be universal and everlasting; that Messiah will come; that he will suffer death to make an end of sin; that he will rise again; that he will have a numerous spiritual progeny; and moreover that Messiah is God, the mighty God, the Father of eternity, Jehovah. The Gospel proves the fulfilment of all these declarations, *therefore* the divine authority of the Old

Testament necessarily establishes that of the New; and the truth of either cannot be disputed without affecting the other. They stand or fall together. Jesus Christ being the mighty God, who himself taught this doctrine of the Gospel, it is at our own peril, if we reject it. If there were no other foundation for the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity than the following command of the Saviour of the world, what higher authority or sanction could we have for believing and obeying it? "Go, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name (not names) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) Jesus Christ uttered these words after his resurrection from the grave, and his victory over death and hell. He is the eternal amen; he cannot err. He spoke to poor illiterate men, to Jews, who knew that there was but one God, and who naturally had an extreme abhorrence for any thing, which has the least show of weakening this great truth. Yet these very men are commanded to baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Christ well knew the offences and scandals, which unbelief and licentiousness would introduce into his Church on account of this doctrine, but as he always acts for the good of that Church, he did not withhold the injunction for the opposition it would meet with from corrupt and

carnal minds ; who, forgetting that he has the words of eternal life, and that he himself is the way, the truth, and the life, presumptuously contradict this doctrine, and dare to think him capable of teaching any thing contrary to that reason, of which he is the source, and contrary to those Scriptures, which he himself indited.

It is certain, that Christ has said, Go, and baptise in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Here mention is clearly made of *three* different persons ; it is evident that he does not enjoin baptism in the name of any quality, or virtue, nor does he wish to confound the creature with the Creator, but rather to establish a perfect equality among the three, for he invariably taught the unity of God. Consequently it is manifest, that God, in whose name alone it is lawful to administer baptism, is the same one Supreme, who is distinguished under three characters of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We cannot reject this doctrine, so plainly taught by Jesus Christ, under pretence that if we receive it we admit three Gods, without impeaching *Wisdom himself*. (Prov. viii. 22—31.) The Holy Scriptures declare, that the Father is God, “ There is but one God, the Father.” (1 Cor. viii. 6.) Again, that the Son is God, “ We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” (1 John v. 20.) And again, that the Holy

Ghost is God, “ Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” (Acts v. 4.) The three are united in this passage, “ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” (2 Cor. xiii. 14. All this is clear, but it is equally true, that St. Paul maintained no other doctrine, when he mentioned the three, than what he had learnt from him, who called him to the apostleship, and instructed him in the knowledge of the Gospel. All the apostles well knew that there was but one God, and on this article of faith they were no doubt as scrupulous as other Jews, and as much so as some pretend to be, who are falsely called Christians ; but the apostles judged rightly and soundly of the doctrine of Christ. They spoke as he spoke ; they believed his testimony ; they asserted the existence of only one God, but they called him Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, after the example of their master, who taught them this doctrine, when he commanded them to go, and baptise all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They shewed more reverence and submission to his authority, who they knew possessed the words of eternal life, than to expect any contradiction in his doctrine, but bringing their thoughts into captivity to the obedience of him, they ever maintained that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, without

ceasing to hold, that "there is none other God but one," (1 Cor. viii. 4.) and, that "the Lord our God is one Lord." (Mark xii. 29.)

It is upon these authorities then that Christians believe what is called *the Trinity in Unity*. We challenge the Arians and Socinians to produce such testimonies of their heretical opinions. We ask, if they are better informed than the apostles; if they are wiser than the Son of God, and whether they suppose Christians are less scrupulous than they are of multiplying the deity, by believing this doctrine? When we speak of three angelic beings, or three human creatures, we necessarily mean three angels, or three men, because it is certain there may be, and in reality there are three, and more angels, and three and more men, but this language cannot apply to three divine substances, because it is false, and absolutely impossible that there should be three Gods, neither can there be more than one. This scrupulousness is therefore ill-grounded, and unreasonable, and no one will reject this Bible-doctrine, except those who confound darkness with light, because their eyes are blinded by *the God of this world*.

Christians employ the word *person*, because language does not admit of a fitter term to express this great article of their faith, implied in the command, Go, and baptise in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost. *Here* it has not the same meaning, as when it refers to creatures; it can only signify one manner of existence, not a diversity of natures; because the Godhead is one and indivisible. The word *person* has not always been in use, yet God was always believed to be Father, Son, and Spirit. It was first adopted to impress more clearly on the minds of Christians the doctrine of the Lord Jesus, and in order to strengthen them against the errors of those, who dare to say that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are only three different names of the same object, as if Christ, the eternal wisdom, would have used terms, which convey such different ideas to the mind, without designing us to make some sort of distinction, and without intending to shew us, that there really *is* some distinction, yet at the same time without exposing us to multiply the Godhead, and thus mislead us from that great truth, which he always inculcated, viz. that there is but one God, and that it is impossible there can be more than one. The term *person* has therefore been introduced in order to mark this distinction, and also to strengthen the faithful followers of Jesus against the false notions of all, who, under a show of reverence and zeal for God, set up their own judgment above the Gospel, and thus dishonour the infinite wisdom of Jehovah Jesus. The word of God is full of expressions drawn from natural objects



familiar to us, and the Holy Spirit employs them for the purpose of giving us clearer conceptions of what God is in comparison of man; and in order to draw us more closely to himself, he displays his great love and goodness to the children of men. Hence these expressions, God repents; he is angry; he has eyes; he stretches out his arm; Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father; God is clothed with light; he walks on the wings of the wind, and similar figures, which are merely designed to exhibit to us spiritual and invisible things, by means of objects which are familiar to our senses. In this very way the word *person* ought to be understood, in reference to the deity.

Taking the word *person* in its common acceptation, it is as certain that there are *not* three persons in the Godhead, as that God is free from all those passions, and bodily members which the Bible gives to him; for, being a Spirit, he is necessarily *one*. Thus when it is said there are three persons in the deity, Christians only understand, that the divinity subsists in three different ways, and they use this expression, that some faint conception may be formed of that incomprehensible mystery. The apostles speak of one God, one Lord, one Spirit. Who can suppose that the one God is not the same as the one Lord, and one Spirit; or that the one Lord is not the one God; or the one Spirit the one God? Is not

God a Spirit? Is he not Lord also? and can it be imagined that there exists any creature, however perfect, of whom it might be said, he is the one Spirit, or the one Lord? If such a thought be contrary both to reason and to the scripture account of God, why do some dare to stop here; and since the Bible testifies so plainly of *three*, why do they conclude, that there are not three; and that the three before cited are only names of that God, in whose *single name* baptism is enjoined? Why again do others suppose, that the Son is inferior to the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is likewise inferior? If this inferiority really existed, would it not be impiety to think, that Jesus Christ wished to smooth this inequality, and to set up creatures on the same level with their Creator? How then could the apostles declare, without insulting the majesty of a jealous God, "who will not give his glory to another," how could they declare, that there is but one Lord, namely, the Son; and but one Spirit, namely, the Holy Ghost? This doctrine therefore of the Tri-une God is revealed. Christians confess that it is *above* reason, but they maintain that nothing in it is *contrary* to reason. Reason teaches us, that when God speaks, we are bound to believe him *without reasoning*; because we know that he cannot err, and that he cannot wish to deceive us. Now it is written in Matthew

xxviii. 19, "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." By the same evangelist it is recorded, chap. iii. 16, 17. that at the baptism of the Saviour, three were manifested; the Father, who said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" the Son in the river Jordan; and the Holy Ghost, who descended in the visible form of a dove. In the Gospel of St. John, xiv. 26. we read, that the Holy Ghost is "the Comforter," whom the Father will send, and whom the Son will likewise send: (xv. 26.) where a striking distinction is observable between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; and 1 Corin. xii. 4—6. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God, which worketh all in all." We perceive likewise a distinction of *the three* in the blessing invoked by the apostle upon the Corinthians. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) Here we see, that favour and inward peace are implored from three distinct personalities, who are yet but one God, because from him alone emanate, as from a fountain, both grace and peace, according to the apostle James, i. 17. "Every good and every

perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." We find throughout the Bible mention made of the three, to each of whom the Scripture assigns the titles, the attributes, the operations, and the worship, which belong only to God. This is the source from whence Christians derive the doctrine of *three in one*, neither more nor less, each distinct from the other, yet all together but one essence, one deity, eternally one and indivisible. It is clearly revealed in the Bible, that there is but one God; and yet all that is there recorded, both of the Son and Holy Ghost, can only refer to God himself. What extreme folly then is it to be afraid to use the language of Scripture, and to confess that "the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods, but one God." (Athanasian Creed.) Is it more true, or more reasonable to say, that the Son is inferior to the Father, and that he is an inferior God? Would not such an assertion be directly contrary to right reason, which cannot possibly admit more than one God; one, who needed not to create a being somewhat like himself, in order to execute his purposes; and forasmuch as he is infinitely wise and good, he would not do this, lest by such an act he might expose his frail creatures to pay to such a being, inferior to God, though far superior to all other intelligent creatures, that adoration,

which is due to no other than to God only. This indeed would be to explain divine revelation by our dim reason, instead of allowing God to be his own interpreter, for revelation speaks both of the Son and of the Spirit, as it does of God himself: (Acts i. 16. and xxviii. 25.) it also enjoins baptism to be administered in *their name*; it ascribes to them the creation, and the preservation of all things, (Colos. i. 17.) it calls them God (John i. 1—3. and Acts v. 3); it demands for them the same adoration, and the same honour, without ever noting any inequality touching the divinity, which is their common property; or the worship, which is offered to them. (Rev. iv. 9. and Heb. i. 2.)

While we speak the language of scripture, we need never fear to err. We cannot oppose reason, when we believe with submissive faith what the word of God teaches us; and we shall then be truly wise and enlightened, when we know things just as they are revealed, without wishing to be wise above what is written. Now the scriptures of truth teach us, that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and that nevertheless there is but one God. Let us believe them, and in order that we may understand what we believe, let us remember, that the word is addressed to ourselves; that it is a *personal* revelation of what we are required to believe, a voice from heaven calling the Father God, the Son God, and

the Holy Ghost God, and declaring that yet there is but one God. This indeed is far above man's feeble reason, but it is in no wise opposed to it, for the same word tells us, that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is co-eval both with the Father and the Son. It attributes to each equal power, equal wisdom, the same will, and the same essence, admitting no inequality whatever among the three, and ascribing alike to each all the works, which are ascribed to God. This truth propounded in this way, does not revolt against reason, which it would do, if the Bible, while it makes mention of three, and ascribes to each the operations, and worship, which belong to God alone, declared at the same time, either that the Father is more ancient than the Son, or that the Son is inferior to the Father, or that the Holy Ghost is more Holy, or more of a Spirit than the Father and the Son; or, in short, if it ascribed to either of the three any properties, or attributes, which it declared not to belong to some one of the three. Such doctrine indeed would be not only above reason, but also directly against it; *then* we should not be obliged to believe, that these three are but one God, for we might be certain, that this could be no revelation from heaven, because God, who addresses our reason, cannot act contrary to himself. Yet he reveals to us in his word, that the Father, the Son, and



the Holy Ghost are One God; and this he does in a clear manner, and in such a way as does not at all contradict reason. This suffices for our duty, which is, to believe him. He does not intend that we should comprehend it in this world, because here we see but in part. He has revealed this truth, which is giving us a partial view of it, and is besides, a call for the exercise of faith, the manifestation of submission, and the practice of humility, as well as an excitement of a more intense desire for that place, where we shall no more see darkly, but shall know things as they are; where we shall be satisfied with the likeness of God, and have our understandings perfectly enlightened, without any danger of abusing those gifts and graces, which we could not safely possess while absent from the Lord. For the doctrine of the Trinity we have a divine revelation; this is sufficient for us. God has not seen fit to communicate more of it to man. We do not understand how the Father, Son, and Spirit subsist together in the divine essence. It is not necessary to comprehend it, since the word of God does not explain the manner of their subsistence.

No one ought to reject a doctrine which is plainly revealed in the Scriptures, under the pretence that it is incomprehensible. This is to wish to be wiser than God, for what he has revealed without expla-

nation, he wills us to receive, simply upon his word, without comprehending it. If there were any reason in rejecting what is revealed because we do not understand it, we should, on this principle, renounce the doctrine of the creation of the world; for who can comprehend how something could be made out of nothing? Who can understand the union of soul and body? Yet who is there, that can reason at all, but admits the existence of both? It is enough to know that God reveals any thing, how far soever it may be above our understanding, in order to admit it as a truth. We are bound to believe it, though it be incomprehensible, because, however mysterious and impenetrable it may be by finite reason, yet there is something in it which is clear, viz. its discovery. Reason itself determines, that there is more propriety in believing a revelation of God, although we cannot understand it, than in rejecting what is manifestly revealed, merely because it is incomprehensible. Reason embraces the truth without understanding the manner of it; it receives it, because it comprehends *that it is a revelation*; in this way we believe God; we trust his veracity, his infallibility, and his word, and rest solely on the authority of his testimony. Faith is not an empty sound. We *do* understand what we believe, when we understand that it is God who proposes the matter of



our faith; and we understand that he proposes it, when the doctrine, how far soever it be above the reach of our weak conceptions, has no absurdity in it, nothing unworthy of God, nothing contradictory, and nothing revolting against reason.

Though we do not comprehend how the Godhead subsists in a plurality, because this is far above man's reason, which, being naturally limited, cannot grasp infinity, yet in some measure we do comprehend this mysterious union, for we understand how an offended God must necessarily require a satisfaction proportionate to his infinitude. We understand, that for this purpose *He Himself* must needs interpose. We further comprehend, that one cannot make satisfaction to oneself, consequently there must be a plurality of personalities in the Godhead. This plurality we see clearly and distinctly exhibited in the New Testament, and though it be not so visible in the Old, yet is it *there* plainly revealed. In the New it is written, "Go and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii. 17.) "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." (2 Cor. xiii. 13.) "There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One." (1 John v. 7.) Here and in other places of the New Testament the plurality

is plainly expressed. It is also distinctly marked in the following passages of the Old Testament. "Let us make man in our image;" (Gen. i. 26.) that is, let us make him capable of knowledge and love, and let us give him a capacity to use these blessings aright. "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. iii. 22.) As if God had said, I lament the condition to which man has brought himself by disobeying the command of his Creator, for it now appears, that man will not have been created in our image as one of us, but only to know good and evil; though the design of his creation in our image was, that he might attach himself to the knowledge and love of divine things. Behold, the man who was made as one of us will never enjoy his high destiny, if we leave him in his present fallen condition of knowing only good and evil. In both these passages it is easy to discern the manifestation of the plurality. It is God alone who says, "Let us make man in our image." He does not speak to angels, who are only creatures, and could have no part in the formation of man; nor can it be supposed that God speaks of himself in the plural number, as earthly sovereigns commonly do; for besides that this style is without any example in the most ancient writings of the Old Testament, it is only used by kings of the earth, because

they exercise their authority with the advice of their councils, which circumstance can never apply to the Sovereign Majesty of heaven and earth. The other passage, "Behold, the man is become as one of us," sets the question at rest, for who can suppose a king to express himself in this way for the sake of dignity: "It is the will and pleasure of one of us, or, it is the command of one of us." Therefore the words, "one of us," which refer to "Let us make man in our image," evidently shew that there is some plurality in the Godhead. Isaiah seems to determine the number to be Three, when he writes of God; "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; but they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit." (lxiii. 9, 10.) Besides these passages in the Old Testament, the following are some which may be adduced in confirmation of this doctrine:

Gen. xi. 7. Go to, let *Us* go down, and there confound their language.

Gen. xx. 13. When God—*They* caused me to wander. *התעני*

Gen. xxxi. 53. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father—*They* shall judge *ישפוט*

Gen. xxxv. 7. Because God—*They* appeared unto him. *גלו*

Deut. iv. 7. Who hath the Elohim so near unto them, *אלי*, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon *them* for? *אלי*

Deut. v. Heb. 23. Eng. 26. Hath heard the voice of the living God, *אלהים חיים*. One speaks. *מדבר*

Josh. xxiv. 19. Ye cannot serve Jehovah, for *He* is *אלהים קדשים*

1 Sam. iv. 8. The Philistines called God—The Gods—the illustrious ones. *האדירים*

2 Sam. vii. 23. Whom The Elohim—*They* went to redeem. *הלכנו*

Job v. 1. To *which* of the *Holy Ones* wilt thou turn.

Psalms lviii. Heb. 12. Eng. 11. He is a God, that judgeth in the earth. *שפטים*

Psalms cxlix. 2. Let Israel rejoice in his *Makers*.

Isaiah vi. 8. Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *Us*.

Isaiah liv. 5. For thy *Makers* are thy *Husbands*; the Lord of Hosts is *His* name.

Jer. x. 10. But Jehovah, He is the True Elohim—the Elohim—the *living* *חיים*

Jer. xxiii. 36. Ditto.

Dan. xi. 5, 6. Chaldee.

Dan. vii. 18, 22, 25.

Prov. ix. 10. The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the *Holy Ones* is understanding. *קדשים*

Prov. xxx. 3. *Holy Ones*.

Eccles. xii. 1. Remember now thy *Creators*.

Hosea xi. 12. But Judah is faithful with the *Holy Ones*.

Mal. i. 6. A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master. If then I be a father, where is my honour? and if *I* be Masters (or Lords) where is *my* fear, saith the Lord of Hosts?

But in the New Testament the Trinitarian doctrine is pointed out with such clearness and precision, that we cannot credit the divine authority of the Old, without receiving at the same time that of the New. This doctrine is plainly revealed; it is necessarily connected with the work of man's redemption, and no one can make a right use of his reason without believing it. True, it is incomprehensible, but reason teaches us, that we

ought to believe it without understanding it, because God has revealed it. Reason recognizes that God is infinite; that his perfections cannot be scanned by short-sighted man, or even by angelic beings. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" (says the inspired book of Job, xi. 8.) "Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; What canst thou do? deeper than hell, What canst thou know?" Again, in xxxvii. 23, "The Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice." Although the Gospel-dispensation has rent the veil, which concealed under the Mosaic economy those great truths which are manifest to Christians; although the shadows of the old covenant have disappeared, and the Sun of Righteousness shines in full splendour upon them, yet God still retains in his religion traces of his incomprehensible greatness. Clouds and darkness are round about his throne. He has discovered certain truths, and placed them within our reach, because it was necessary that we should have some knowledge of them, for the regulation of our lives; but there are others, which he has thought proper to reveal without vouchsafing any explanation. In these he designed that we should recognize his infinity, without comprehending it, proving by our submission to his word, that we believe all

that he has said; not because we understand it, but because He is Truth, and because Truth has spoken to us.

The inexplicable mysteries of religion resemble the dark side of the cloudy pillar, but the revelation of them may be compared to the luminous part. With regard to the deep things of God, it is only our duty to be fully persuaded that they are revealed; beyond this we need not enquire. When reason knows that it is God that speaks, it would be no longer reason, if it withheld its submission to every divine declaration, even though it should not be able to fathom the same. Morality is doubtless an essential part of true religion, but it is not religion itself. The glorious doctrines and sublime truths of the everlasting Gospel are, properly speaking, the Christian religion. This is evident according to the apostle Paul, (2 Cor. ii. 5. 7.) "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."—"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery," that is, hidden and impenetrable by human wisdom; and it is by presenting to our faith and humility these mysteries, which are unattainable by reason, that God vouchsafes to bring men into the way of salvation, and gives them, as it were, an opportunity of repairing the abuse they before made of their reason, in separating themselves from their Creator, whose perfections and infinite goodness



were manifested to the Gentiles in the works of creation, and more particularly to the children of Israel, when the law was promulgated for their benefit. "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe:" (1 Cor. i. 21.) that is, by the doctrine of Christ crucified, which was to the earthly-minded Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greek philosophers foolishness. But these high mysteries, which blind reason dares to call a stumbling-block and foolishness, are the glory of the religion of Jesus, and the great means, which St. Paul affirms to be employed by God in saving the souls of men. By believing them, because God has revealed them, we manifest our faith, and prove ourselves to be heavenly-minded. Believers are fully persuaded, that every word of God is more true than the things which they understand; they see invisible things, and already enjoy a foretaste of that benediction pronounced by Jesus Christ, "Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed:" that is, Blessed are all those, who, persuaded of the truth of God's word, have firmly believed his *whole* revelation, without requiring any further proof of its veracity than what the word itself affords. Contradictions are supposed to exist in mysteries, because we wish to understand

what is in its very nature incomprehensible to feeble man. When a created being measures itself with *The Uncreate*, it loses itself; it is confounded by the resplendent light, inso-much that the eye, dazzled as it were by the brightness of the sun, which it presumes too curiously to examine, forms to itself a variety of fanciful objects, and imagines it sees figures and colours which have no existence in that planet, the glory of which has blinded the optics of the observer.

The word of God informs us, that it is the property of the Gospel, "to cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. x. 5.) "Receive with meekness," (says St. James) "the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." (i. 21.) "He that hath no rule over his own spirit; is like a city that is broken down and without walls:" (Prov. xxv. 28.) that is, when we will not submit to what the word of God requires us to believe, but will cavil at it and look beyond it, we open a door to numberless errors, and at length fall into actual infidelity and heresy. How dangerous a thing is it then to pry into mysteries which transcend human reason! Let us take heed "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; but to think soberly, and not above what is written."



(Rom. xii. 3. 1 Cor. iv. 6.) Let all attend to this exhortation, and that we may one day behold every thing clearly in heaven, let us now receive the word of God in simplicity of faith. Let us be satisfied to see now in part, what he does not intend we shall otherwise understand in this stage of our existence. By firmly maintaining the truths of divine revelation, we shall confound the wisdom of this world, and the presumptuous reasonings of weak mortals, who dare to profane with sacrilegious hands the ark of God, and to look with unhallowed eyes into the testimony of the Holy One of Israel.

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#### PRAYER FOR A JEW.

*To the Editors of the Jewish Expositor.*

Gentlemen,

IN my former letter (inserted in the 17th number of your Expositor,) I mentioned that I had in my possession a work written many years since by my late excellent mother, entitled, "An Address to the Jews." As this "Address" contains much valuable matter, I do not know that I can better fulfil her pious intentions in intrusting so valuable a deposit to my care, or more powerfully aid the great cause to which your labours are so honourably devoted, than by supplying a few extracts from her manuscript. The following prayer forms the conclusion of the 1st Part of her work, and was composed by

her for the use of her Jewish readers, on whom she had been pressing the argument in favour of the Messiahship of Jesus drawn from Jewish prophecy. "Surely," she observes, "while you are thinking on this important subject, you should fall on your knees before the great Jehovah, and say to this purpose." Then follows the prayer to which I have alluded, a prayer which I would to God every Jew who may read it would sincerely adopt as his own.

"O thou great Eternal, who hast made the heavens and the earth, and all their hosts, before whom angels veil their faces, and cry, Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts, thou hast a right to do as thou pleakest with thy creatures; thou mightest have left the whole race of Adam to have perished in that state of sin and misery, into which, by their dreadful apostasy from thee, they had plunged themselves; but wast pleased of thine own self-moved goodness to promise a Saviour, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; and thou wast pleased to make further and further manifestations to our fathers of this glorious person, till at length thou didst speak in such plain language, that their believing expectations were raised to the highest pitch. Thou wast pleased by thy prophets to describe him very minutely, and even to declare the time and the place in which he should appear. But now, O

our God! the time is elapsed, the place is destroyed, the tribes are scattered; we have endured thine indignation for more than seventeen hundred years. Where can we look for this great deliverer? what can we say? Thou canst not lie, and thy promise (as we believe) is not fulfilled, nor can it be fulfilled. Great God, we are in distress before thee. Our fathers trusted in thee, and were not confounded; they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them. But we are in a more dreadful case than any of our fathers were. We have sinned against thee, but we have no sacrifice to offer; shut out, for ever shut out from thy holy place where only sacrifices might be offered. What can occasion this thine indignation against us? Of old our fathers sinned against thee, and thou didst pardon; thou forgavest their multiplied transgressions against thee: but now thine anger burns for ever, and thy wrath from generation to generation. We are cast off from thy sight, and are wanderers on the earth. We are indeed, as thy servant Moses declared we should be, the tail and not the head. We are despised of all men; forsaken and forlorn. O our God! how shall we appear before thee? What shall we say unto thee? We are in great distress, and know not what to say. But this we know, thou art true, thou art holy, we have sinned against thee. Shew us our transgressions; teach us to know what is our iniquity,

and the iniquity of our fathers, that thou continuest thy wrathful indignation against us for so many generations. Have we committed that sin, which thy servant Moses declared in thy name thou wouldest require of us? have we rejected that prophet, which thou didst promise thou wouldest raise up unto us, like unto Moses; and unto whom thou didst command us to hearken? Teach us, O our God! to banish that self love which makes us think we cannot be mistaken. Give us a holy self-diffidence, and make us willing to be taught by thee. But, gracious God! where shall we turn? Wilt thou grant us a fresh revelation of thy will? The Scriptures which thou hast graciously put into our hands, and which are read in our synagogues, carry us no further than to the building of the second temple. Thou didst promise that the great Messiah should appear in that temple; but we have no prophet to inform us that that event took place. The Christians, among whom we live, talk of one Jesus of Nazareth, who, they say, answers to the description given of the Messiah in thy sacred word: but we have been taught to despise him, and to think that our fathers did right, when they cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. But, O our God! we must confess unto thee, that we are fallible, erring creatures. Our fathers of old killed the prophets, and stoned those whom thou didst send unto them; and if this Jesus,

whom we have been taught to despise, was indeed that Messiah who should come into the world, how great has been our sin in thus rejecting him! O Jehovah! we would give up ourselves unto thy teaching. If it be so, let thy good Spirit lead us to the knowledge of it. Do thou assist us in examining the evidences that are produced in proof of the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth."

On the spirit and language of this prayer, if the reader feels as I do, he will think all comment superfluous. That many a Jew may adopt this prayer as his own is the earnest desire of

Your cordial well-wisher,  
C.

Cambridge, June 12, 1817.

#### LETTER FROM "ONE OF THE SECOND TRIBE."

To the Editors of the *Jewish Expositor*.  
No. VII.

Gentlemen,

IN the prosecution of my plan, I now enter upon a peculiarly interesting subject, THE LAWS RELATING TO LEPROSY. They will be found in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus. Among the various disorders with which the Jews were afflicted, the leprosy was marked as the most odious and disgraceful: and the rules for distinguishing it from all similar disorders, were laid down by God himself with a very extraordinary accuracy and precision. As existing in garments, and in

houses, it seems to have been peculiar to the Jews; and to have entirely vanished with their dispensation: but there was doubtless some important end for which God visited them with this disorder: and what that was, may be gathered by the various ordinances relating to it. In all the differences which God commanded to be put between things clean and unclean, he designed to teach us, the *evil* and *bitterness* of sin: but from the leprosy more particularly; we may learn, I say, first, THE EVIL OF SIN.

Whatever resemblance the leprosy might bear to some other disorders, it differed materially from all others.

It was *universally judicial*. It was not, as some have thought, acquired by contagion; for it was not at all infectious: but it proceeded immediately from the hand of God; and was always considered as a punishment for sin. Miriam was smitten with it for her rebellion against Moses:\* and Gehazi, for his covetous and dishonest conduct towards Naaman the Syrian.†

In this light also should sin be viewed. True, it first entered through the device of Satan: but from that time has it been, more or less, judicially inflicted by God, on those who have disregarded the divine commands. Frequently is God said to "blind the eyes," and "harden the hearts" of men.

\* Num. xii. 10—15.

† 2 Kings v. 27.



We must not indeed suppose that he ever does this by a positive infusion of sin into the soul: *this* would not consist with his own glorious perfections: but he abandons men to the evil of their own hearts, and withholds from them that grace whereby alone they can overcome their corruptions. Multitudes are "given up to a reprobate mind, because they like not to retain him in their knowledge."\* And he tells us plainly that this punishment shall be inflicted on us, if we do not guard against sin in its first beginnings: the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: he shall eat of the fruit of his own ways, and be filled with his own devices."† Who indeed has not found the truth of these declarations? Who doth not see, that if we harbour pride, covetousness, impurity, sloth, or any other evil principle in our hearts, it will gain such an ascendant over us, as at once to chastise us for our folly, and to augment our guilt? The truth is, that the very heaviest judgment that God can inflict upon us in this world, is, to give us over to the evil of our own hearts, and to say, "He is joined to idols; let him alone."‡

Next, it was *pre-eminently hateful*. If there were but the smallest appearance of leprosy on any one, he must instantly have it examined with all possible care. He must not trust

to his own judgment, but must apply to those whom God had authorized to determine the point, according to the rules prescribed for them. If the disorder existed, though in ever so low a degree, the person was instantly visited with all its painful consequences: and, if only a doubt of its existence was entertained, he must be shut up, and re-examined, week after week, till the point could be determined. Surely nothing could more strongly declare its odiousness in the sight of God.

In this respect it most emphatically marks the hateful-ness of sin. "Sin is that abominable thing which God hateth."\* He charges us to abhor it,† and to abstain from all appearance of it.‡ He solemnly assures us, that, if we harbour it in our hearts, it shall not go unpunished.§ He requires us to "search and try our ways," and to bring every thing to the touch-stone of his word:¶ nor would he have us satisfied with our own judgment, lest our self-love should deceive us: We must come to our great High Priest, "whose eyes are as a flame of fire," and beg of him to "search and try us, and to see if there be any wicked way in us."‡ However clear we may be in our own eyes, we must say with St. Paul, "I judge not mine own self: for I know

\* Rom. i. 28.      † Prov. i. 30. 31.  
and xiv. 14.      ‡ Hos. vii. 17.

\* Jer. xlv. 4.      † Rom. xii. 9.  
‡ 1 Thess. v. 22.      § Ex. xxxiv. 7.  
and Prov. xi. 21.      ¶ Isa. viii. 20.  
§ Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.



nothing by myself; but he that judgeth me is the Lord."\*

Further, it was *absolutely incurable*. There was nothing prescribed, nor indeed any thing to be attempted, for the cure of this disorder. Nothing but the hand that inflicted it could remove it. Hence the removal of it is most generally expressed by the term, *cleansing*: and those who were relieved from it are said to have been *cleansed*.†

And certain it is that none but God can deliver us from sin. No superstitious devices have ever been able to root it out, no human efforts to subdue it. The blood of Christ alone can wash away its guilt; and the grace of Christ alone can suppress its operation.

Clearly as the evil of sin is seen in this disorder, we behold more strongly marked THE BITTERNESS OF IT.

The person afflicted with the leprosy, was put out of the camp or city in which he had dwelt, and forced to live alone, being cut off from all intercourse with his dearest relatives.‡ How inexpressibly painful must this have been!

Here then we see shadowed forth the miserable state of men by reason of sin. When it shews itself only in unallowed infirmities, it will consist with the divine favour; just as the leprosy, when it was turned to a kind of scurf which covered the whole body from head to

foot, was considered as no longer rendering the person ceremonially unclean;\* but, as long as it continued "deeper than the skin," with "quick raw flesh rising," and "white or yellow hair;" in other words, while it reigns within, and produces its accustomed fruits, it incapacitates us for *fellowship with God's Church on earth*, and for *admission into his church in heaven*.

First, I say, it incapacitates us for *fellowship with God's church on earth*. Social intercourse indeed with the Lord's people is not prohibited: but that fellowship which the saints enjoy with each other in spiritual exercises, is altogether beyond the reach of those who live in wilful sin. The apostle justly asks, "What communion has light with darkness, or righteousness with unrighteousness, or he that believeth with an unbeliever?"† The views, desires, and pursuits of the ungodly are altogether different from those which characterize the children of God; and they make for themselves that separation, which under the law was the subject of an express command. Strictly speaking perhaps, the separation begins on the side of the Lord's people, because they are commanded to "come out from the world, and be separate, and *not to touch the unclean thing*:"‡ but the effect is the same: in the one case, the unclean were

\* 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. † Luke xvii. 14, 17. ‡ 2 Kings vii. 3. and xv. 5.

\* Lev. xiii. 12, 13. † 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. ‡ Ibid. ver. 17.

but few, and therefore were separated from the mass; but in the other case, the mass are the unclean; and the clean are separated from them.

Next, it incapacitates us for *admission into his church in heaven*. St. Paul appeals to us respecting this as a thing plain, obvious, and undeniable:\* and our blessed Lord repeatedly affirms it with the strongest asseverations that it was possible for him to utter.† When king Uzziah was smitten with the leprosy in the temple, all the priests with one accord rose upon him, and *thrust him out* of the temple; yea, and he himself also *hasted to go out*.‡ And thus it would be in heaven, if by any means an unrenowned sinner were admitted there: he would be *thrust out*,§ as unworthy a place among that blessed society; and he would haste to flee out, from a consciousness that nothing but redoubled misery could await him there.||

In a review of this subject, two REFLECTIONS occur to my mind. The first is, that we should *entertain a godly jealousy over ourselves*.

Men are very apt to "think themselves something when they are nothing." But we should diligently "prove our own work, that we may have rejoicing in ourselves alone, and not in another."¶ As in the leprosy, so in the disposi-

tions of the heart, it is often difficult to distinguish with certainty: the lines of distinction between unbelief and fear, presumption and faith, worldliness and prudence, and between a variety of other principles existing in the mind, are more easily defined on paper than discerned in the heart: truth and error often so nearly resemble each other, that none but our great High Priest can enable us to discern them apart. Yet, if an evil principle be admitted into the mind, it will produce a thousand evils in the life. Hence a peculiar stigma was put upon the leprosy, when detected in the *head*: then the person was declared "*utterly unclean*."\* We should be on our guard therefore, and beg of God, that we may never be permitted to deceive our own souls. When doubts arose about the leprosy, the person was shut up for seven days; and this was repeated, till the point could be ascertained. And if we would occasionally retire from the world, and spend a day in fasting and self-examination, we should detect many evils of which at present we have very little conception, and acquire a perfection of character not to be attained in any other way.

The other reflection with which I shall close the present subject, is, that we *should humble ourselves for our remaining imperfections*.

\* 1 Cor. vi. 9.

† John iii. 3. 5.

‡ 2 Chro. xxvi. 28.

§ Luke xiii. 28.

|| Ps. i. 5.

¶ Gal. vi. 3—5.

\* Ver. 44. This expression does not occur any where else.

However we may have been cleansed from our leprosy, there is, as was before observed, the leprous scurf still over us, from head to foot.\* We still therefore have occasion to cry with the prophet, "Woe is me; for I am a man of unclean lips."† "Our very righteousnesses are, in fact, but filthy rags;"‡ so that we still have reason, like holy Job, to "lothe and abhor ourselves in dust and ashes."§ The external signs of sorrow which were prescribed to the leper, we should commute for those which indicate true contrition: "Rend your heart," says the prophet, "and not your garments."|| We should "walk humbly with God," and so much the more when we find that "he is pacified towards us."¶ And, as they who had only been suspected of the leprosy, were required to wash their garments,\*\* so let us who yet retain such awful memorials of it, wash ourselves from day to day, "in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness."

I am, Sirs,

ONE OF THE SECOND TRIBE.

## LECTURE TO CHRISTIANS ON JEWISH SUBJECTS.

### THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION TO THE MO-SAIC.

2 Cor. iii. 9. *For if the ministration of condemnation*

*be glorious, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.*

THE importance of the thesis which is to be the subject of our present meditation, is very great; not only in its bearing on the great question between Jews and Christians, of which it is the pith and marrow; but also in its bearing on the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and on the right interpretation of both. It stands connected with a multitude of theological points, many of which, for want of duly attending to the right clue afforded in this chapter, are points of dispute among Christian divines.

But this importance is connected with corresponding difficulties, in the discussion of this thesis. Those who satisfy themselves with dancing, like the summer-fly, on the surface of the Gospel river, may think such a subject easily discussed; but to those who wish to fathom its depth, and to fix its soundings, the work must appear of a more arduous nature.

The subject to be discussed is, "The superiority of the Christian dispensation above the Mosaic:" and this is the subject which the apostle has discussed in this chapter, from the fifth verse to the end. And therefore, though I have selected the words of the text, as containing the thesis within a short compass, yet the whole of the paragraph contained within the limits I have specified, will pass under our notice.

\* Lev. xiii. 12, 13. † Isa. vi. 5.

‡ Isa. lxiv. 6. § Job xlii. 6.

|| Joel ii. 13. ¶ Ezek. xvi. 62.

\*\* Ver. 34.



The apostle is commending his own ministry, which had been undervalued among the Corinthian professors of Christianity. With this view, without any self-elevating personal considerations, he leads them to the superiority of the Christian above the Mosaic dispensation; while he allows that the former, like the latter, might be, through a defect of faith, "the savour of death unto death," to those among whom he preached.

Without further preamble I shall endeavour to shew,

I. *What are the things which the Apostle in our text compares and contrasts under the terms, "the ministration of condemnation" on the one hand, and "the ministration of righteousness" on the other.*

II. *Wherein lies the superior glory of the latter, when contrasted with the former.*

I. *What are the things which the Apostle in our text compares and contrasts under the terms, "the ministration of condemnation" on the one hand, and "the ministration of righteousness" on the other.*

The importance of definition in all discussions, is generally allowed. And in this case its importance is peculiarly great in consequence of the difficulty attending it, and the momentous consequences which are suspended on it. Now a definition must comprehend all the attributes of the thing to be defined,—a rule that will be very

important in defining the terms of the apostle in our text.

The things which are compared and contrasted in our text, are called *the ministration of condemnation*, and *the ministration of righteousness*. In the context they are called *the ministration of death*, and *of the Spirit*—or more simply, *letter* and *spirit*—that which was *to be done away* and that which was *to remain*. All these phrases, found in the context, belong, respectively, to one and the same thing.

We shall enquire then,

1. What the apostle meant by "*the ministration of condemnation*." The general answer is easy.—He meant the Mosaic institute, the Sinai dispensation.

But here the difficulty occurs. What was that institute, and in what sense could the Apostle call it *the ministration of condemnation*?

The Mosaic institute is generally considered to have consisted of three component parts; viz. the moral law, or the law of the ten commandments, promulgated anew at the formation of this institute,—a renewed and enlarged ceremonial code,—and also a judicial code, forming the condition of the national covenant, into which the Israelites were brought.

Now two distinct views are to be taken of the Mosaic institute or Sinai dispensation. It had a higher and a lower object. It was, according to the manner in which it was received, *the ministration of righteousness*,



or the ministration of condemnation. The gospel itself is, in like manner, "the savour of life unto life," or "of death unto death."

It must be observed, that a system of grace had been revealed from the fall, which was renewed to Abraham, and is called by the apostle to the Galatians, chap. iii. 17. "the covenant" or dispensation which was "confirmed of God in Christ." This, then was not vacated by the intervention of the law. It ran parallel with, or rather made a part, and that the principal part, of the Mosaic dispensation; so that all who were eternally saved, during that dispensation, were saved by virtue of the Abrahamic covenant.

This revelation of grace was interwoven with *the moral law*, as that law was promulgated anew from mount Sinai. Mark its preface,—“I am the Lord thy God.”—How, but in Christ! Nay, Christ himself was the lawgiver on this occasion, and that in the character of the angel of the covenant, Acts vii. 37, 38. Heb. xii. 24, 25. The same person who speaks to us from heaven, spake to the Israelites on earth, and he spake to them in the character of the mediator of the new covenant. To spiritually enlightened persons the moral law was then as it is now, the, gracious means of conviction and a delightful rule of conduct.

This revelation of grace was the substance of *the ceremonial*

law. Its allusive rites were “*shadows*,” as the apostle calls them, bearing a reference to the substance which gave rise to them. They were “shadows of good things to come,” but the body, “the substance, is Christ.”

This revelation of mercy was also connected with *the national covenant*, of which the judicial law, consisting chiefly of moral precepts, but not without a mixture of ceremonial ordinances, was the condition. For the infinitely holy, just, and unchangeable Jehovah could not have entered into any covenant with fallen creatures, without a reference to a mediator or surety. He might as well have treated with devils as with guilty man, independently of the intended redemption of the latter by their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But the Mosaic institute, or the Sinai dispensation, had also a connection with *the covenant of works*. It contained a new revelation of the terms and penalty of that covenant. That covenant could not be renewed with fallen creatures: indeed it had never been, and could not in the nature of things, be abrogated; for God is “without variable-ness, &c.” It is not correct; I conceive, to say that it is now abrogated. It remains, and must ever remain in its full power of pristine obligation. Its terms have been fulfilled by a surety in our stead, and on that suretyship fulfilment our hope of salvation rests, so that believers in Jesus are saved

according to the covenant of works.—But though that covenant could not be renewed, personally, with fallen creatures, yet its condition and penalty might be anew promulgated in subservience to the gospel, and this was done from mount Sinai.

That the moral law was such a renewed promulgation appears from the terrific “thunderings and lightnings” and the earthquake which attended its ministration. Mark the effect on Moses, Heb. xii. 21. Its effect on the other Israelites.—The object of this terrific scene was conviction of sin, Rom. v. 20. “It entered that sin might abound” in the conscience by conviction, not in the heart by increased pollution, for God is not the author of sin. The law was invested with the office of a schoolmaster, to prepare the world by a previous education for a higher dispensation. Gal. iii. 24. You will observe that the law as given by Moses, is contrasted with the dispensation of grace. Gal. iv. 24. and iii. 17. The Sinai dispensation thus corresponded with the plan adopted by our Lord to bring a sinner to repentance. Matt. xix. 17—19. The apostles also promulgated that law which their master had explained in his sermon on the mount, and for the same purpose, for instance, Gal. iii. 10. Thus the law *παρεῖς ἦλθεν* came in by the by, not as the principal object and scope of the dispensation, but as subservient to another object.—The ministration of

condemnation and righteousness are not however to be considered as *blended* in the Mosaic institute; but the ministration of condemnation, or the renewal of the law, was *added* because of transgressions, after the revelation of mercy had been made, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

This double use of the moral law was, perhaps, obscurely intimated by the renewal of the two tables, after that those which had been first written had been broken. But on this remark I lay no stress.

The ceremonial ritual also stood connected with the covenant of works.—The death of its annual and daily victims, themselves free from guilt, but bearing by imputation the sins of the offerers, not only exhibited Christ the true Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, but they exhibited also the penalty of the broken law. How awful was the continual spectacle of the agonizing convulsions of expiring animals!—How tremendous the inference which the sight forced on the sentient spectator! “Without shedding of blood there is no remission.” “The wages of sin is death” eternal. “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” The immediate inference from the bleeding spectacle was the impossibility of expiation but by a forfeiture of life.—The doctrine of suretyship atonement was more remote, and not discernible by the carnal mind.

The national covenant also stood connected with the original covenant of works, under which Adam, as the representative of mankind, was placed. Its law, the condition of reward or punishment, was partly moral and partly ceremonial.—Its penalty was temporal affliction and death.—Its reward, (the result of external obedience to that law) was the land of Canaan and its accompanying blessings.

Having thus endeavoured to define the Mosaic institute, or Sinai dispensation, we are prepared to determine what it is that the apostle speaks of in our text under the name of "*the ministration of condemnation*;" that which is elsewhere called "*the law*," in contradistinction from the promise made to Abraham; and "*the old covenant*" or dispensation in opposition to the new, which new covenant consists in "grace and truth by Jesus Christ." By "*the ministration of condemnation*," then, I understand the Sinai dispensation IN ITS LETTER, as distinct from the Abrahamic and gospel dispensations, which indeed are one in substance, and equally answer to the apostle's other phrase, "*the dispensation of righteousness*." The apostle himself has indeed afforded us a clue to his meaning by calling "*the ministration of condemnation*" the letter, in opposition to the spirit, or hidden light and life, to which the letter referred, and which was concealed. Rom. ii. 27. and

vii. 6. He also calls it the *ministration of death*, in opposition to the ministration of the life-giving spirit, ver. 7, 8. It is a ministration which has been abolished, as intended only for a temporary use, and having only an intermediate object, in opposition to a new ministration then existing and intended to last till the end of time and even for ever, being that to which all former revelations had respect, and in which they were all to terminate. Now the moral law, as the condition of the covenant of works, is not abolished with respect to those who are under it;—it is still the ministration of condemnation and death.—It is not abolished, with respect to believers, as the condition of that covenant. They have fulfilled it in the person of their surety, and are justified by it. It is not abolished as a rule of life, with respect to believers or unbelievers.—It has all its native obligation, and cannot lose its force, till God shall have ceased to be "the Holy One of Israel," and can sanction sin; for all defect of conformity to that law is sin.—But that which is done away is the moral law in its Sinai form, conveying in its letter the tremendous declarations, "obey and live;" "transgress and die." And it is done away with respect to those only, who are delivered from the letter by means of the spirit,—to those whom "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set free from the law of sin and death."



*The ceremonial law*, which was also in its letter the ministration of death, has ceased to be obligatory, because all its shadows are realized and substantiated in the person and work of Christ. *The national covenant*, consisting of both, is done away, the partition wall between Jew and Gentile being thrown down by the irrestrictive publication of the gospel. That of which the apostle speaks is, figuratively, the vail which Moses put on his face, which concealed from the view of the Israelites the glory of his countenance, as the unbelief of their hearts prevented them from discerning the *Spirit*, the hidden meaning of their own institution, which Spirit the apostle tells us, in the close of the chapter, is Christ. "Now the Lord is *that Spirit*, and where that Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," spiritual liberty from legal bondage. "And we all," who have received the gospel, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Lord the Spirit," the Spirit of that law of which we have been speaking. "Moses saw the shekinah, and it rendered his face resplendent, so that he covered it with a vail, the Israelites being unable to bear the reflected light; so we behold Christ, as in the glass of his word, and, (as the reflection of a very luminous object from a mirror, gilds the face on which the reverberated rays fall) our faces shine too; and we vail

them not, but *diffuse* the lustre, which, as we discover more and more of his glories in the gospel, is continually increasing.\*

That which the apostle has compared and contrasted with *the ministration of condemnation*, will require but few words in its definition. It is the dispensation of grace, commencing immediately after the fall, from the time of the first promise, renewed to Abraham, and brought fully to light by the manifestation of *him* who is its source and channel. This is called *the ministration of the Spirit*, because it is the spiritual import of the Mosaic institute, in opposition to its literal sense and more outward ordinances, which are *the ministration of death*. *The circumcision of the heart* is the hidden import of *outward circumcision*.—*Christ our pass-over* is the antitype of *the paschal lamb*. The necessity of having *the law written on the fleshly tables of the heart* is the thing signified by *its inscription on two tables of stone*. The dispensation of the gospel is, moreover, called by our apostle *the ministration of righteousness*, because it reveals a divine righteousness answerable to all the demands of the law, and a provision for the payment of its penalty. "Christ is the end of the law," moral and ceremonial, "for righteousness to every one that believeth." But to this *end* of their own law the Israelites

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\* Doddridge in loco.

could not look, the vail being on their hearts; and therefore they lived and perished, for the most part, under the covenant of works, renewed in the form of the Sinai national covenant. This is that dispensation which is *to remain* for ever, not only to the end of the world, but throughout the eternity that is to come.

I have employed, perhaps, too much time in defining the things which the apostle has contrasted one with the other. But it seemed of importance to explain at large my thoughts on the subject, in order that it might appear what, in my view, is that superiority which the apostle ascribes to the Christian above the Mosaic dispensation. We proceed then to inquire,

II. *Wherein consists the superior glory of the Christian dispensation above the Mosaic.*

Let it be remembered, that the opposition lies between *letter* and *spirit*, between that which lay on the surface of the Mosaic dispensation, and that which was concealed under its surface, the grace and truth which were to come by Jesus Christ.

The same comparison, with a similar result, is instituted in various parts both of the prophetic and New Testament Scriptures. Two instances must for the present suffice. Jer. xxxi. 31, &c. and Heb. viii. 6, &c.

*"The ministration of righteousness exceeds in glory."* The image of glory is light, God is light, Christ is the sun, i. e. the light of righteousness.

He is the image of the Father's person, and the brightness of his glory. He is the glory of Jehovah. Light was the constant token of Jehovah's presence, till He appeared, in whom dwelleth all the fulness, and in whose person the glory of God shines with unclouded rays.

Now as the glory of the sun exceeds that of the moon, or as native light exceeds reflected light in brightness, so does the brightness of the Christian dispensation, which reveals "*God manifest in the flesh*," exceed the Mosaic, in which the light was reflected from carnal ordinances. The light itself, indeed, as discovered under both dispensations, was the same in substance; but the mode of communication differed widely.

The superiority,—the more glorious character of the Christian dispensation,—arises from two circumstances. It displays more fully the glory of God, and it reveals more clearly the way of salvation to sinners; it discovers more distinctly the only foundation of human hope and comfort.

1. It displays more fully the glory of God. His glory shines pre-eminently in the face of Jesus Christ. It is admitted by the apostles that there was glory in the Sinai dispensation. God's awful attributes of power, justice, holiness and truth, were therein tremendously displayed. His hatred of sin, his determination to punish it, his truth in the execution of the penalty of the first covenant, were exhibited in the most expressive man-

ner, whilst, amidst thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes he delivered what is called, his "*fiery law*." The language of that dispensation, "He will by no means spare the guilty," "Be ye holy, for I am holy," manifests his glory. His mercy also is therein revealed, while he proclaimed his name, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation;" and was to be seen by the eye of faith in all those sacrificial ceremonies, which to the carnal eye proclaimed only terror.

But in the incarnation, sufferings and death of the divine mediator, these attributes shine with a glory which indeed excelleth. From those brows, which were crowned with thorns the glory of every attribute of deity shines with a brightness which dazzles the mental optics of heavenly intelligences. Nay, gaze, wonder and adore. "Unto principalities and powers in heavenly places is made known, by the redemption of the church, the manifold wisdom of God." Here justice, holiness, truth and love, shine with a splendour unrivalled by any other work, in which divine wisdom has engaged. Yet, like the rays in the rainbow, the brightness of

these attributes is so *blended*, that the eye of the contrite sinner can gaze on it without being overwhelmed thereby.

2. The Christian dispensation discovers more distinctly, the foundation of human hope and comfort.

It is acknowledged that the Mosaic dispensation laid a sufficient foundation for hope, and that those among the Israelites, from whose hearts the vail was removed, discerned it. But few comparatively did discern it, and those few discerned it dimly. In the streaming blood of the sacrificial victim, and in the ascending smoke of the holy incense, they saw the atoning merit of the future Redeemer. But, the dispensation itself, "*gendered to bondage*,"—what hope and comfort it communicated to a few favoured souls, it derived from a better dispensation then future, even that which *excels in glory*.

The prominent feature of the Mosaic institute was terror and dismay. It was the *ministration of condemnation*. The Israelites requested that they might hear the voice no more; Moses trembled. Read Exodus xix. 16. and xx. 18, 19. and Heb. xii. 18, &c.

The prominent feature of the Christian dispensation is grace. God is exhibited as a reconciled father sitting on a throne of grace.—The divine mediator is full of grace.—The promised Spirit is the spirit of adoption.—Contrast the language of the two dispensations, Ex. xix. 12, 13. with "Come



unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The mediators of the two dispensations widely differ. Moses a servant; Christ the Lord of his own house. Moses putting a vail on his face; Christ unvailing the glory of the Lord. Aaron the priest, himself a sinner, needing atonement by the blood of others; Christ the immaculate priest and lamb, justifying others by his own blood. The priesthood of Aaron successive, and therefore imperfect; Christ an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.

The great object of the Sinai dispensation was the discovery of sin. It was added because of transgressions; that of the Gospel is the invitation of grace. The former gendered to bondage; the latter is the law of liberty.

This is an endless subject. The glory will not be fully known, till the twenty-four elders, the representatives of the Levitical and Christian church, see eye to eye, and face to face, their common Lord, and unite in the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Would time permit, I might shew you how the subject before us refutes the errors of the neonomian on the one hand, and of the antinomian on the other. The neonomian, by his system of a remedial law, sets

aside both the law and Gospel. While the antinomian, confounding the Sinai dispensation with the covenant of works, erroneously conceives, that the apostles, when they are stating the abolition of the Sinai dispensation, are speaking of the abolition of the original law, the law of creation, the eternal rule of right to all rational creatures. No, that law is abolished in none of its rights. It has still a claim to the penalty of transgression, and has received it in the vicarious sufferings of Jesus. It has still a claim to perfect obedience, and has received it in the obedience of our divine surety. It still authoritatively claims the heart for God supremely, and for his creatures subordinately. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself. Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil it. He left all its rights as he found them, while he honoured it in the highest degree by his own obedience unto death.

O that the children of Abraham would see the aim and drift of their own dispensation. The time is coming when the vail shall be taken from their heart, and it shall turn to the Lord. May the Lord hasten that time, and teach us to pray and labour for its approach.

But let the professing Christian remember, that there is *letter* and *spirit* in the Gospel, and that the letter still killeth, while the spirit only giveth life. What is the outward visible

sign in baptism without the inward spiritual grace ! What the bread and wine in the other sacrament, without the body and blood of Christ, which are spiritually and indeed received by the faithful. What is outward worship, without the spirit of grace and supplication. What is hearing without faith. He was not a Jew who was one outwardly, so he is not a Christian that is one outwardly, for baptism like circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.

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#### STATE OF THE JEWS IN BARBARY.

[Continued from page 274.]

##### CHAP. II.

*The moral Conversation of the Barbary Jews.—The Ingredients of their Religion.—Their backwardness to Disputes.—Their Creed, Occasion, Author; with a short Paraphrase thereof, &c.*

RESEARCHING in the conversation of the Jews here treated of, it seemed to be very regular, and agreeable to the laws of a well-civilized conduct: for setting aside the artifices of commerce, and collusions of trade, they cannot be charged with any of those debauches which are grown into reputation with whole nations of Christians, to the scandal and contradiction of their name and profession. Fornication, adultery, drunkenness, gluttony, pride of apparel, &c. are so far from being in request with them, that they are scandalized at their frequent practice in Christians: and out of a malicious insinuation, are sorry to hear, that

any of their nation should give a name to, and die for a people of such vices.

But how commendable soever they may be for their sobriety and temperance, and other domestic observances, yet that wherein they ought to be chiefly orthodox, they are the most erroneous, namely, their religion. For however they may pretend the present Judaism, or that sort of religion and worship which they now profess, to be contained in the law and prophets; yet to those who duly consider the ingredients thereof, it will appear to be patched up of the traditions of the masters, and the opinions of old philosophers; which are indeed so artificially interwoven with scripture, that this last to an unwary surveyor may still seem to be predominant. The truth of which assertion will be manifested when we report the particulars of their religion. But whatever it be composed of, there is but small hope, as things now stand, to have it reformed: for the Bible, the rule of all reformation, though it be not denied the people's reading, yet the giving the sense thereof belongs only to the masters, in whose interpretation of the text, the vulgar upon pain of excommunication are bound to acquiesce. And this was told me as an arcanum Judaismi by Rabbi Aaron Ben-Netas, a person not unlearned in their law, and one who wanted nothing but Christianity to render him acceptable to equal esteemers; to whose free

communication I owe many of these remarks.

Though these Jews are sufficiently taught to evade all those scriptures which relate to the truth and establishment of Christianity, yet they are not forward to enter into disputes concerning them. And if it so happen that they are forced thereunto, they will not be confined to the laws of disputation, but usually confront text with text, and never directly answer the objection, but set up another against it. But as to their declining of disputes about religion, it seems very wary and prudent; for when any thing concerning Christianity is the matter controverted, they are generally so fiery and cholerick that they cannot refrain from an ill-bred railing; and those blasphemous contumelies, which are even detestable to common ingenuity and candour, are usually vented by the Jews in their arguings about the Gospel, against which they are trained up in an unmanly hostility: it being a part of their first institution, to imbibed a malicious prejudice against Christianity. And the better to manage this ill-seasoning, there is not a passage of the Old Bible any way relating to the proof of the Messiah's being already come, but it is so perverted by the glosses of the Rabbins, that the common people are not able to arrive at its genuine intent and meaning. And what is more observable, and not less to be deplored, even the meaner sort are so

versed in these spurious glosses, that scarce any can be met with who is not provided of one evasion or other, to elude the plainest text that proves the advent of Christ to be already past. Nor need it be matter of wonder to hear that the very common Jews are so well skilled in what we now speak of; seeing that it is the first and last of all their instruction, to understand and defend their religion, in a direct opposition to Christianity.

And the better to facilitate the people's understanding of their religion, and to prevent the dangers that may accrue by leaving them to the hazardous toil of collecting their principles out of Moses and the masters, they are provided with two systems or abridgments thereof; the one containing the rule of their actions, to wit, their book of affirmative and negative precepts; the other the substance of their faith, or the things to be believed, namely, their creed: which consists of thirteen articles, and commonly called, *Sepher Ikkarim*, or the book of fundamentals. They greatly glory in the immemorial tradition of this creed, and of the joint agreement in the meaning thereof, ever since they were a people. It is true, the committing of it to writing they grant to be but of a late date; and that Moses Ben-Maimon (a Corduba Jew, who died about the year 1404 of grace) foreseeing the dangers that would hardly be prevented



in the present dispersion of the Jews, which might come upon a mere oral tradition of their creed, caused it to be ensured in writing; and in this condition it now remains. But Rabbi Joseph Albo, another Spanish Jew, and a most virulent blasphemer and indefatigable impugner of Christianity, not being content with Ben-Maimon's division of the Jewish creed into thirteen articles, reduced them to three, and called his antichristian exposition thereof, by Maimon's title, Sepher Ikkarim; which he wrote 321 years after the other's death.

Now because this creed is the sum of the present Judaism, we will here insert it, with the common and received sense and meaning of every article.

## ARTICLE I.

*I believe with a true and perfect faith, that God is the Creator (whose name be blessed,) governor and maker of all creatures, and that he hath wrought all things, worketh and shall work for ever.*

By this article they assert and believe the divine essence. That God is the cause of causes. That by him the whole creation is preserved and sustained. That when he pleaseth he can reduce the world to nothing as he raised it thence. That he hath an absolute power and empire over all things. That his being is so perfect, that he needs no aid nor assistance, nor is liable to diminution or change.

## ARTICLE II.

*I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator (whose name be blessed,) is one, and that such an unity as is in him, can be found in none other: and that he alone hath been our God, is, and for ever shall be.*

By this they affirm the unity of God. That he is not like a common nature running through divers kinds and individuals. Not compounded like bodies of integral parts. That he is so one, as that he can neither be divided nor multiplied.

But how true soever this article may be in itself, or plausible in this exposition: yet the Jews manage it to pull down the Christian's faith of the trinity; which they maintain to be an assertion of a triple Godhead.

## ARTICLE III.

*I believe with a perfect faith, that the Creator (whose name be blessed) is not corporeal, nor to be comprehended with any bodily properties: and that there is no bodily essence can be likened unto him.*

Here they declare their faith of God's incorporeity; and that he is so pure a spirit, and simple a being, that none of those things can be said of him which are of bodies.

And by this article they confirm their infidelity of the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity: because thereby they imagine, that according to the principles of Christianity, God must become a body, to

whom all corporal proprieties are utterly incompatible.

## ARTICLE IV.

*I believe with a perfect faith the Creator (whose name be blessed) to be the first and the last, and that nothing was before him, and that he shall abide the last for ever.*

Though this is their faith of God's eternity, yet from hence they despise and deride that fulness of time wherein (according to the Christians) God was manifest in the flesh, and the Word was made man.

## ARTICLE V.

*I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator (whose name be blessed) is to be worshipped, and none else.*

Here they protest against idolatry: and exclude all sorts of creatures from being the object of divine adoration. But their chief design is by this article to deny and condemn the Christian's invocation of Christ, as a mediator and advocate.

## ARTICLE VI.

*I believe with a perfect faith that all the words of prophets are true.*

By this they declare how God, out of his mere good pleasure, chose some out of mankind, whose understanding he purified and enlightened above others, and gave them the spirit of prophecy: causing their understanding closely to adhere unto his. And then

God spoke by them, and revealed unto them that way wherein he would have men to walk.

## ARTICLE VII.

*I believe with a perfect faith that the prophecies of Moses (our master, may he rest in peace) were true. That he was the Father and chief of all wise men that lived before him, or ever shall live after him.*

In this article they intend not so much to magnify Moses, as to lessen Christ. And the blindness of their malice is herein so great, that they have here made that an article of their faith, which they ought to make the contrary: for while they place so much confidence in Deut. xviii. 15. it is wonder to see them believing so contrary to their hope.

## ARTICLE VIII.

*I believe with a perfect faith that all the law which at this day is found in our hands, was delivered by God himself to our master Moses (God's peace be with him).*

On this article they build the divine authority of the law. But much dispute about the manner of its delivery: whether God gave it Moses in writing, or he writ it from God's mouth.

## ARTICLE IX.

*I believe with a perfect faith that the same law is never to be changed, nor any other to be given us of God (whose name be blessed).*

And it is upon the supposed immutability of the law that they hope for the rebuilding of the temple and Jerusalem; their return to Canaan, and the restoration of all the Mosaical ritual, which is the chief pillar of Judaism. The latter part of this article is wholly to decry the Gospel, or the law of Christ.

## ARTICLE X.

*I believe with a perfect heart that God (whose name be blessed) understandeth all the works and thoughts of men: as it is written in the prophets, he fashioneth their hearts alike: he understandeth all their works.*

## ARTICLE XI.

*I believe with a perfect faith that God will recompence good to those who keep his commandments, and will punish those who transgress them.*

In this they believe a final retribution of good and evil works: that every one shall have as he deserves.

## ARTICLE XII.

*I believe with a perfect faith that Messiah is yet to come: and although he retard his coming, yet I will wait for him till he come.*

In this article the Jews declare their assurance of the coming of the Messiah. That there is no set time for his coming. And upon this account they forbid all curious inquiring concerning the hour of his appearance. And they still

use that old rabbinical execration—Let their spirit burst who count the times.

## ARTICLE XIII.

*I believe with a perfect faith, that the dead shall be restored to life, when it shall seem fit unto God the Creator; whose name be blessed, and memory celebrated, world without end. Amen.*

I do not find that they strive much to crook this article to any evil purpose against Christianity: but that it is a bare affirmation of the resurrection. Of which the Jews retain very extravagant opinions, as will shortly be discoursed.

In these thirteen articles are comprised the Jews' Credenda, wherein they exhort and oblige all of their communion to live and die, as they hope for any comfort in the future state. And notwithstanding that many of these articles may be capable of a good construction, yet according to the present received interpretation thereof among the Jews, they are not so much a system of Judaism, as a cunning and malicious contradiction of Christianity. And the subtle Rambam (who is said to have first committed them to writing) seems rather to have designed the Jews' confirmation in an ill opinion of the Christian, than any instruction in their own religion. And that they might imbibe a more implacable hatred against the Christian faith, the crafty Rabbi so composed (for he is thought to have been the au-



thor thereof,) the Jews' creed, that it might one way or other wholly confront the Christians. Not doubting but that they would hardly be induced to embrace a religion, which they saw was so greatly opposite to that of their first catechism, and wherein from their infancy they had been taught to expect an happy immortality.

Now this which we may suppose was but the design of Maimonides, is become the general practice of the Jews in Barbary. For I have heard from one (whose understanding in their religion had got him the title of a master,) that there was not an article of their faith which they did not understand in a sense wholly opposite to Christianity. And taking a freedom to rail at our religion (in which they are all well gifted) he instanced in the eleventh article, as seeming to bear the least ill-will to Christianity, and from thence warmly beat down all thoughts of redemption; with great assurance protesting, that he would have none to pay his debts, nor any but himself to satisfy divine justice for his sins: that he did not expect the felicity of the next world upon the account of any merits but his own: that he was certain whosoever lived piously and kept the law, could not miss of being happy: or arriving at the bliss to come upon his own legs. With a deal more of the like stuff, even too heinous to be inserted.

But wishing this poor obstinate people an happy rescue from such impious thoughts, I

shall close up this chapter with observing, that the Jews give their creed a double note of respect above any other part of their religion. For though I do not find this creed set down in their common service-book, yet in honour thereof they begin their mattins with it, and utter it in a hollow tone differing from that wherein the rest of the office is chanted.

[To be continued.]

## THOUGHTS AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

CHIEFLY ADDRESSED TO THE SAVIOUR.

BY A CONVERTED JEW.

[Continued from p. 269.]

### II.

"*Woman, behold thy son!*"—  
"*Behold thy mother!*" John  
xix. 26, 27.

WHEN thy precious feet were at liberty to walk, thou wentest about doing good; now they are fastened with iron spikes to the cross, thy lips cease not to be employed for the good of the souls and bodies of men. Doubtless in thy life time, though thou condescendest to be thyself supported by others, thou wast the comfort and support of her who bore thee under her heart. But now being about to withdraw thy bodily presence, thou, mindful of the sacred relation which thy manhood stood in with her, provided for her future ease at the same time that thou givest thy beloved disciple a fair opportunity of testifying his love to thee by obeying thy dying command.

Mary was a blessed woman ; not so much because she had “gotten the man,” the Messiah, “from the Lord,” as because she was enabled to look up to him as “God her Saviour.” Little would it have profited her to have the honour of being the mother of Jesus as the Son of man, had not he also been formed in her as the Son of God, “the hope of glory.” She was the mother of Jesus, inasmuch as he is the offspring of David ; she was the daughter of Jesus, inasmuch as he is the root of David.—Those who have obtained like precious faith with Mary shall see her in glory. And I see not why we should deprive ourselves of that delightful thought that we shall then hear from her many things relating to the youth and infancy of Jesus, which, though they were not necessary to be known for our salvation, yet doubtless will contribute to increase our joys, and to heighten our strains of praise to the Lamb that was slain for us.

### III.

“*Verily I say unto thee, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.*” Luke xxiii. 43.

Surely, Lord, in this instance, thou didst give abundant confirmation and add full weight to those words of thy holy apostle, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save the chief of sinners.” What must this declaration of pardon and acceptance have been to the penitent thief ? O, they were, in

a literal sense, “life from the dead.” Consider the delightful prospect, “Paradise ;” the certainty of the enjoyment of it, “Verily I say unto thee ;” and the nearness of all this happiness, “to-day ;” and who entertains a doubt but that these words had not only the power of taking away the sting of the sufferings of the believing sinner, but that they must have filled his soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory ?

Here, Lord, thou appearest as the sovereign of thy people, who doth all things according to his good pleasure. Many of thy servants thou art pleased to make bear the full burden and heat of the day ; whilst thou callest some at the third hour, others at the sixth, and others at the eleventh hour, of which last description the penitent thief was one. He belonged to that blessed number whom thou hadst loved with an everlasting love ; and though thou didst suffer this sheep to go astray for all his life-time, yet in one day, yea, within a few hours, thou didst both call, and justify, and glorify him ; and all this, because thou hadst predestinated him in thine eternal counsel.

Lord, remember *me*, now that thou art in thy kingdom ! Destitute, as the thief, of any righteousness of my own ; burdened, like him, with sins innumerable, I cannot but plead guilty before thee ; but, Lord, remember me for the sake of that precious blood shed for helpless, wretched, needy sinners. Thou didst “*nothing* amiss” and yet wast crucified,

that those who have done *every thing* amiss might be pardoned and accepted with God.

"Thou shalt be *with me* in paradise." Yes, Lord, *without* thee paradise would not be paradise; with thee, hell is turned into heaven. As darkness is the consequence of the withdrawing of the sun, so misery must be where the beams of the Sun of righteousness do not shine: but "in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

It was well said by one, "There was one thief pardoned on the cross that none might despair, but *only* one thief, that none might presume."

IV.

"*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34.

Light and darkness are less incompatible than God and sin. Where the one is, the other cannot be, because the one always expels the other. Hence it is said in the word of God, "Your sins have separated between me and you." The proper and dreadful punishment of sin is, the dereliction of God, which, as was said above, must cause consummate misery. The Lamb of God took away the sin of the world by bearing and suffering the full punishment of its demerit, the last degree of which is an utter forsaking of God.

Thy sufferings, O Lord, had arrived to the utmost when they pressed from thee this woeful exclamation; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

me?" All thine other sufferings were in some measure alleviated, for thou wast not alone, but the Father was with thee; but now, when he gave, as it were, the finishing stroke by withdrawing his inward presence, when he left thee *alone* agonizing in pains of body and grief of soul: then it was that his word awoke against thee his equal. The sufferings of thy soul were indeed always the soul of thy sufferings, but this was the greatest of all.

As we are now come to the highest pitch of our Saviour's sufferings, it may not be impertinent to trace the different gradations of them. The first thing said of his actual suffering is, that he "was troubled in spirit" (John xiii. 21.) by the foresight of the treason which one of his own disciples should commit against him. Then Jesus, in Gethsemane, testifieth that his soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death; now he sweats as it were great drops of blood, and, in the midst of this hot conflict, he is so reduced as to stand in want of the succour of an angel; he then undergoes the inhumanity, derision, and cruelty of his bitter enemies. Then, forsaken of all, but his Father, he bleeds on the accursed tree, and now—his God forsakes him too. Thus, Lord, thou didst dive into the very bottom of the wrath of God, and in thine own strength didst exhaust it altogether. Thou didst go from one degree of sufferings to another, that thy people might advance from strength to strength, from faith



to faith, and from grace to grace. Thou wast troubled in thy spirit and didst sweat great drops of blood, that their blood or guilt might not remain upon their own head; thou gavest thyself up voluntarily to the wrath and malice of tyrants, that the "lawful captives of Satan might be rescued from his power; thou wast crucified, that they might die to sin and live unto righteousness; forsaken of God, that they might be joined to him and be one Spirit with him.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Let this administer consolation to you, mourning believer, when you groan under the hidings of your Saviour's countenance. He also endured the grievous privation of his father's presence in a situation when it was most needful for him; you therefore must fill up the measure of his sufferings in all parts, if you mean to become partaker of all his glory. At the same time our agonizing, deserted Saviour left us a shining example of unreserved trust and repose in God; for we shall hear him immediately crying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit?" "Who, then, is he among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, *that walketh in darkness, and has no light?* let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Is. l. 10.

"Eli, Eli." Easily might the by-standers have understood the words of so known a place in their scriptures. But

instead of this their insatiable malice creates a mean pun, by distorting the word Eli into Elias; and thus affords them new matter for taunts, "Let be," say they, "let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Let not then the believer wonder when he is willingly misunderstood by the world in his plainest expressions, seeing the same happened to his Lord and master. When you profess to be justified only by the blood and righteousness of your Saviour, the cry will be, "What licentious and fanatical doctrines are these!" When you pray that your hearts might be purified to be a fit temple for the Holy Ghost, the world will declaim against your pride and presumption. Your seriousness is stigmatized, as "starched grimace, hypocritical austerity, &c." Your zeal is wild enthusiasm; and if you confess yourself a vile, hell-deserving sinner, then your understanding is in a delirium, or you are altogether hypochondriacal. But this, instead of deterring us, will rather have a tendency to encourage us, as being an evident proof, that we do not belong to the world, but to him whom it hated and persecuted before us.

v.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." Luke xxiii. 46.

After having interceded as the mediator, forgiven and accepted as the Son of God, thou prayest unto thy Father as the Son of man. It was then that the Father was greater than

thyself; for as God thou couldst not taste death.

How needful, O my Saviour, was this thy prayer, or rather act of faith, in such circumstances. Thou wast near the triumph over all thy enemies and those of thy church; nor was Satan ignorant at that decisive moment that he was about to be foiled, and ultimately robbed of all his dominion over redeemed man. He would therefore employ all his infernal power and malicious rage to disturb thy soul, as a serpent infuses his hottest poison when he receives a deadly blow. But thou preventest him with the well-known terrible sword of the word of God, and thus frustratest all his hostile projects against thee and thy body, the church: "Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit."

"Father!" this is the endearing title with which thou taughtest thy people to address the first person in the triune Jehovah, in consequence of the perfect reconciliation which thy precious blood has wrought out for them.

"Into thy hands I commend my Spirit." With the same kind, though not the same degree of filial, unreserved confidence, each of thy people are enabled to cast their soul, and all their soul-concerns, upon thee; they venture their all on thy sovereign mercy; they entrust this all to thine everlasting faithfulness. Though sin and Satan daily strive to quench the sacred flame thy Holy Spirit has kindled within them, yet shall

they be more than conquerors through thee who lovedst them: for

To thee they look, to thee they bow,  
To thee for help they call;  
Their life and resurrection thou,  
Their hope, their joy, their all.\*

What a pattern of humility, resignation, trust in God, and perseverance in prayer, dost thou, blessed Saviour, exhibit to us in this thy dying breath. O that we might be continually impressed with a humbling sense of our inability to keep our own souls in safety under any circumstances, prosperous or adverse. Such a sense of our imbecility would lead us to know where our strength lies, and teach us withal this prayer of David, (Ps. xxxi. 5.) and of him that is greater than David, "Father, into thy hands I commit my soul." O for a disposition to submit to the Lord's disposal with us, however dissimilar to our most sanguine expectations. Happy he, who can say with the intense fervour of patient Job, (Job xiii. 15.) "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" but thrice happy he, who, with the solid and settled faith of St. Paul, is persuaded that God is able to keep that which he has committed unto him, even his precious soul, against that day. Of this we may be sure, that never poor sinner committed his soul to God his Saviour, who has not been kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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\* Newton, Olney Hymns.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE  
RUSSIAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

[Extracted from a Letter of the Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, to the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society.]

" *Bible Society House, St. Petersburg, June 8, 1817.*

" YESTERDAY was celebrated the *Fourth Anniversary* of the Russian Bible Society. Notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, and the inconvenient situation of the Taurian palace, (in one of the magnificent halls of which the Meeting was held,) it was computed to have been nearly three times more numerously attended than it was last year. The hall and adjoining room were quite crowded, and presented to the view of the Christian philanthropist a scene of the most interesting and animating nature. Many of the most distinguished personages, both in church and state, were present at the Meeting. I was peculiarly struck with the sight of a groupe of graduated monks and professors from the Newsky monastery, and of a number of military officers, high in rank, who appeared in another direction. Representatives of most of the nations for whom we are preparing editions of the sacred scriptures; such as, Russians, Armenians, Georgians, Greeks, Moldavians, Finns, Poles, Esthonians, Livonians, Germans, and French, were assembled to take part in the ceremony, and listen to the interesting details of the publication of the word

of God in their respective languages. Among others, I observed two learned Russians, who have spent fifteen years at the academy in Pekin, and are masters of the Chinese and Mandshur languages. The scene naturally led my mind to that beautiful passage in the prophet Isaiah: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. Behold, these come from far; and lo, these from the north and the west; and these from the land of Sinim!" May we not confidently cherish the hope, that, by the blessing of God on the progressive efforts of Bible and Missionary Societies, Zion will, ere long, see this prophecy fully accomplished? Already have we beheld a little one become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: yea, and we may add: 'The Lord hath hastened it in his time.'

At half-past eleven o'clock, our noble president took the chair, supported, on the right, by the Archbishops, Michael and Seraphim, and the minister of the interior, and, on the left, by the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Sestrenseвич Bogush. The Prince opened the business of the day in a truly excellent and appropriate speech of considerable length; after which, His Excellency Mr. Papoff, came forward, and read the Report, which was listened to with the most profound silence, by the numerous assembly. I know that you have perused the former Reports of



the Russian Bible Society with the deepest interest; and, I have had an opportunity of remarking, with what eagerness they have been read in different countries of Europe; but I will venture to predict, that, when this document is published, all will allow that it far surpasses any of the preceding, in the richness of its matter, the magnitude and importance of the subjects it developes, and the genuine spirit of Christianity which it breathes throughout. It concludes with a solemn prayer, which made a powerful impression on the auditory, and called forth overflowing ejaculations, to the author of every good and perfect gift, for the continuance of his blessing on the institution. It is absolutely impossible for me to describe to you the sensation which pervaded the whole assembly, on the conclusion of this most interesting record. Their attention, which had been irresistibly arrested, for upwards of an hour, was now relieved, and gave way to expressions of the most laudable enthusiasm in the best of causes. Each turned to his neighbour with smiles of joy, and marks of admiration; and, from one end of the hall to the other, but one sentiment seemed to be uttered: 'What hath God wrought!'

You will recollect the very important resolution passed at the second Meeting of the Committee of the Russian Bible Society, purporting, that they should not consider themselves to have attained the object of

their institution, till they had provided with a Bible, every family, and, if possible, every individual, in the Russian empire. With what ardour they are pushing forward to the attainment of this object, and accelerating the complete redemption of their pledge, will be seen, when it is stated, that, from the establishment of the Society to the present time, its Committee have either published, or are engaged in publishing, no fewer than *forty-three* editions of the sacred scriptures, in *seventeen* different languages, forming a grand total of 196,000 copies. In the course of 1816, the Committee have completed,

<i>Slavonian Bibles</i> .....	10,000
<i>Ditto New Testaments</i> .....	10,000
<i>Finnish Bibles</i> .....	5,000
<i>French Bibles</i> .....	5,000
<i>Samogitian New Testaments</i> ..	5,000

And at present, the printing of the following editions, is either continued, or has been begun, in 1817:—

<i>Slavonian Bibles</i> .....	20,000
<i>Ditto New Testaments</i> .....	5,000
<i>Armenian Bibles</i> .....	5,000
<i>Ditto New Testaments</i> .....	3,000
<i>Greek Bibles</i> ..	3,000
<i>Ditto New Testaments</i> .....	5,000
<i>Georgian New Testaments</i> ..	2,000
<i>Moldavian Bibles</i> .....	5,000
<i>Moldavian New Testaments</i> ..	5,000
<i>German Catholic Ditto</i> ....	5,000
<i>Lettonian New Testaments</i> ..	5,000
<i>Dorpatian Esthonian Ditto</i> .	5,000
<i>Tartar New Testaments</i> , 2,000; Gospel of St. Luke, (extra Copies,) 2,000; Psalms, 2,000; and Calmuc Gospel, 2,000.	

The number of Bibles and Testaments, issued in the course of the year, amounts to 19,431 Copies, which is only about

500 Copies fewer than were issued the three former years put together. The expenditures are nearly in the same proportion. During the three years, 1813, 1814, and 1815, the expenditure amounted to 297,642 Rubles, 47 Copecs; in 1816 alone, 227,770 Rubles, 73 Copecs.

Besides the above, preparations are making for Stereotype editions of the scriptures, in five different languages: they are in a course of translation into the *Common Russian*, *Tartar* and *Carelian* languages; and mea-

asures are adopting for procuring translations into *Turkish Armenian* and *Burat Mongolian*.\*

\* Mr. Henderson adds, in a Postscript, that application has lately been made by the Missionaries at Astrachan for copies of the Sanscrit scriptures (printed at Serampore) for the use of Brahmins, and other Indians, resident in that city, who, on examining certain specimens, desired to be furnished with copies. A letter written in Hebrew, and signed by six Rabbies, has also been received requesting Hebrew Bibles for about nine hundred Jewish families resident in the Kumak country, on the western shore of the Caspian. "Here," observes Mr. Henderson, "IS A FRESH OPENING FOR THE HEBREW TESTAMENT NOW PRINTING IN LONDON."

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LONDON SOCIETY.

### AUXILIARIES.

Leicester Auxiliary, by Rev. G. B. Mitchell, Secretary.....	150	0	0
Newark Ladies', by Mrs. Dyson .....	4	1	0
East Lothian Society, for propagating Christian Knowledge, by Wm. Hunter, Esq.....	8	13	0

### PENNY SOCIETIES.

Jedburgh Ladies', - - by Rev. Robert Young .....	10	0	0
Newbury - - - by Rev. Wm. Roe .....	35	0	0
Hackney and Clapton - by Mrs. J. G. Barker, (half yearly) ..	4	9	6
Pertenhall, Bedfordshire by Rev. J. K. Martyn.....	5	0	0
Wirksworth - - - .....	6	11	6

### HEBREW TESTAMENT.

Leith Auxiliary, by Rev. Dr. Wm. F. Ireland .....	30	0	0
Stromness Female Bible Society, by Mr. Alexander Christie ....	7	0	0
The Friends of Israel at Holbeach, by Mr. Callam .....	5	0	0
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